

INDIANA BEFORE STATEHOOD

Genealogy records and county timeline, based on Episode 1, Indiana Statehood. Part of Brick Walls Beyond Ohio.

THE LINE THAT MOVED MARCH 1, 1803: THE GORE LEAVES OHIO

A family in southeastern Indiana could stay on one farm while its records moved from Cincinnati to two Indiana counties. Match each record's date to the government in charge on that date, then search that courthouse first.

WHERE TO SEARCH BY DATE

EVENT DATE	PRIMARY JURISDICTION TO SEARCH
Before June 22, 1798	Knox County, Northwest Territory (seat at Vincennes), which covered nearly all of present Indiana
June 22, 1798 to March 1, 1803 the Gore only	Hamilton County, Northwest Territory (seat at Cincinnati); search Hamilton County, Ohio records
July 4, 1800 to Dec. 11, 1816 west of the Greenville line	Indiana Territory and the territorial county then in existence (Knox; Clark from 1801; later counties)
From March 1, 1803 the Gore	Clark County, Indiana Territory, for one week; then Dearborn County (from March 7) and the counties later carved from it
After December 11, 1816	The State of Indiana county then in existence

Key rule: If your family lived in southeastern Indiana before March 1803, search Hamilton County, Ohio, for their deeds, estates, and court cases. After that, search Dearborn County and its daughter counties.

KEY DATES

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED
June 20, 1790	Knox County created, covering all of present Indiana and parts of four other future states
1795	Treaty of Greenville line runs from Fort Recovery (Mercer County, Ohio) to the Ohio River opposite the Kentucky River
July 4, 1800	Indiana Territory begins; capital Vincennes; Gov. William Henry Harrison; the Gore stays in the Northwest Territory
March 1, 1803	Ohio statehood; the line runs due north from the mouth of the Great Miami; the Gore goes to Clark, then Dearborn (March 7)
1805 and 1809	Michigan Territory (June 30, 1805) and Illinois Territory (March 1, 1809) split off
May 1, 1813	Territorial capital moves from Vincennes to Corydon
Dec. 11, 1816	Indiana becomes the 19th state, with 15 counties

THREE WAYNE COUNTIES

WAYNE CO., INDIANA TERR., 1803 TO 1805 The Detroit area, in present Michigan	WAYNE CO., INDIANA, FROM JAN. 1, 1811 Eastern Indiana, around Richmond	WAYNE CO., OHIO Northeast Ohio, around Wooster
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Same name, three places. Check the date before you check the map. Indiana's 15 counties at statehood: Clark, Dearborn, Franklin, Gibson, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Knox, Orange, Perry, Posey, Switzerland, Warrick, Washington, and Wayne.

EARLY INDIANA RESEARCH WORKFLOW

- 1 Write down the exact date and place of every record you have.
- 2 Match each date to the timeline on page 1 to find the government and county in charge.
- 3 If the family was in the Gore before March 1803, search Hamilton County, Ohio, deeds and probate.
- 4 Search the Cincinnati land office tract books (Waters, *Indiana Land Entries, Vol. 1*) and federal patents on the BLM General Land Office site.
- 5 Record the meridian with every legal description: First Principal Meridian in the Gore, Second for most of Indiana.
- 6 For 1800 and 1810, build a census substitute from land entries, court, deed, and probate records.
- 7 Check petitions in the *Territorial Papers of the United States*, Vols. 7 and 8 (Indiana Territory), for names.

THE GORE'S CHAIN OF COUNTIES



Today the Gore holds all or part of Dearborn, Ohio, Switzerland, Franklin, Union, Fayette, Wayne, and Randolph Counties, Indiana. A family there may have stayed on the same land through all four counties.

COMMON RESEARCH TRAPS

Lost censuses: Indiana Territory's 1800 and 1810 federal census schedules are lost. The first that survives for Indiana is 1820.

Duplicate township numbers: The same township and range can appear twice in Indiana, once from each meridian (for example, T5N R2W in both Dearborn and Lawrence Counties).

"Wayne County" in 1804: An 1804 Indiana Territory record for Wayne County means the Detroit area, not Richmond.

Hamilton County fires: The courthouse burned more than once, most famously in 1884, but many deed books and early probate records survive. Check before you assume a loss.

Modern boundaries: Do not assume today's county held the earlier record.

Generated visuals: Illustrations help explain the process but are not evidence. Use verified maps and record images for specific claims.

WHERE TO SEARCH

Newberry Library · Atlas of Historical County Boundaries, Indiana	publications.newberry.org/ahcb
Indiana Archives and Records Administration · Land Records	in.gov/iara
Bureau of Land Management · General Land Office Records, federal patents, free	glorerecords.blm.gov
FamilySearch Wiki · Indiana Censuses Existing and Lost	familysearch.org/en/wiki/Indiana_Censuses_Existing_and_Lost
Hamilton County, Ohio, Recorder · Historic records and damaged deed books	recordersoffice.hamilton-co.org

MORE OHIO AND MIGRATION RESEARCH GUIDES: BRICKWALLSBUCKEYES.COM

Keep pushing past your brick walls.